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# Manifesto: A Personal Revolt

Ryan D. Easttum  
*Buffalo State College*

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*Manifesto: A Personal Revolt*

by

Ryan D. Easttum

An Abstract of a Project  
in  
Creative Studies

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements  
for the Degree of

Master of Science

May 2009

Buffalo State College  
State University of New York  
Department of Creative Studies

## ABSTRACT OF PROJECT

### *Manifesto: A Personal Revolt*

Manifesto is a misunderstood and lost art, more commonly associated with Ted Kaczynski and Communism, than the bold, public declaration of intents that it is. Manifesto can be compared to a mission statement on steroids and deserves a place on walls next to vision and mission statements. They can serve as guides to life, a revolt, an intent, the process of change, or anything that is bold, passionate, and worthy of being made public.

This project entails using manifesto to discover and declare passion, motivation, intent, and a general guide to life. The act of writing manifesto is creative at its heart and mirrors the use of Divergent and Convergent guidelines found in Creative Problem Solving. Further, the project is a journey of self-discovery and the quest for authenticity. Included in the process is a guide to write your manifesto and take part in the art that changes and guides lives.

Buffalo State College  
State University of New York  
Department of Creative Studies

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A Project in  
Creative Studies

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Dates of Approval:

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Cynthia Burnett  
Lecturer

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Ryan D. Easttum  
Student

## *Dedication*

*To my parents*

*Mom and Pop: You raised me right and have grown to become my best friends – You're my heroes.*

*Mom: I wouldn't be anywhere without your love and support.*

*Pop: You always challenged me and asked me "why?" You're a modern day and poor man's da Vinci.*

*And*

*To thinking differently – It's why I'm where I'm at...*

## Acknowledgements

To accurately acknowledge those in my life I better start from the start (Loverboy's "Working for the Weekend" referenced there - I know, I'm crazy and weird, but I should acknowledge that too). Anyhow, like my ongoing IOUs to my parents, I owe them a never-ending thanks. Every moment of my upbringing has contributed to me and where I'm at and going. Everybody says they have the best parents in the world and it's cliché, but I really do. To my sister Carmen, I hope you know just how creative you are and if you don't, I'll show you. To Sam, my best friend, the same goes to you: you have more creativity in the DNA you leave on the mouth of your beer can than I could ever hope to have. Our amateur philosophizing and different thinking has put us out and up there, and I kind of like that vantage point.

To Audrey: You are my passion. The twinkle in your eye not only gives me butterflies, but inspires me like nothing else. You give me the motivation I so dearly lack. I've been able to piggyback your determination, grit and passion and it's enabling me to find my path.

To my professors at the International Center for Studies in Creativity: Your unique and distinct qualities and passions are what make this a wonderful place and education. To Cyndi: You've helped pull something out of me that I didn't know existed. Simply put, I'm better for merely having known you. I'm a chameleon as a defense mechanism and you knew something was amiss. Through our interactions and especially your Holistic Approaches class, I'm growing into a better, more authentic Ryan. I'll never thank you enough. To Mike: You are infectious and I mean that it that as a compliment. From your smile to your stories, I cannot help but to love every interaction with you. You have a zeal for life I hope to have one day as well. To Dr. Cabra: I was scared and nervous travelling 2,348 miles to get to Buffalo, but you took the time to personally meet and greet me at the Center. You calmed me and excited me for the journey that lay ahead. Your passion and effort is unparalleled - every class was an adventure and contained an activity that ensured everybody would find it personally meaningful. To Sue: I couldn't have asked for a better professor to start the program out with. Having 559 with you set the table for what was an amazing adventure that ended way too fast. I envy your excitement, energy, and compassion. I hope I can carry the flag to get creativity into public schools as well as you have. To Dr. Puccio: You intimidated me at first, mostly because of your status as chair and a luminary in the field. No longer intimidated, I'm simply in awe. You do so much for the field and actively work to bring it the prominence and recognition it deserves. You challenged me and I always need that. To Roger: You are the consummate professional and give me something to aspire for. In a few short months, you've sharpened my facilitation skills to levels I didn't know existed.

To my sounding board partner Reba: thank you for reminding me to breathe. Whenever I interact with you I am always much more grounded. Your pursuit of balance inspires me and I hope to get there as well.

I'd be remiss if I didn't acknowledge myself. I did the work and I learned the material. Heck, I even talked to myself, but not in a crazy way, just a creative way ;)



## **Table of Contents**

### **Section 1: Background to the Project**

Purpose	1
Description and Background	1
Rationale for Selection	2
What This Project Adds Creatively to Myself and Others	3

### **Section 2: Pertinent Literature**

Introduction	6
Pertinent Literature	6

### **Section 3: Process Plan**

Introduction	9
Project Final Timeline	12

### **Section 4: Outcomes**

Introduction	14
The Final Products	14

### **Section 5: Key Learnings**

Introduction	17
Content	19
Process	20

### **Section 6: Conclusion**

Introduction	23
Next Steps	23

<b>References</b>	25
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**Appendices**

Appendix A: Concept Paper	26
Appendix B: Make Your Own Manifesto	33

## **Section One: Background to the Project**

### *Purpose*

"Get real".

This cliché statement gets tossed about all too often and most likely in 1980's and early 1990's vernacular, but it is those two words I try desperately to live my life by. I crave authenticity, passion, and that feeling of being 'real'. That is why I'm reintroducing the art of manifesto with my master's project. When closely examined, manifesto closely mirrors the tenets of creativity and creative problem solving, with the key being authentic, real, and bold.

I want to show that manifesto is much more than a crazed Ted Kaczynski in a cabin in the woods, but a rather bold and liberating personal statement and declaration that anyone can and should write. I want to provide a guide for others to write their own, and more importantly, I want to ignite the passion I know is buried within me by writing my own manifestos. I've spent too much of my life trying to be everything for everyone else. It's time for me to 'get real' and start being myself, and it all starts with being brave enough to write and declare my own manifesto.

### *Description and Background*

My project is first and foremost a journey into self and discovery, but the ultimate tangible products are completed, printed, and published manifestos, covering the topics of creativity, career, and a personal manifesto. Also, a small guide/tool will be made to aide others in creating their own manifestos, with all this serving to dispel myths surrounding the art of manifesto and bring it back to prominence.

The entire project, albeit abridged, will be self-reflective, to once and for all

overcome my self-inflicted blocks and barriers, discover my passions, desires, motivations, and dreams, and ultimately develop of better version of myself. I'm struggling, personally, to understand that I'm evolving and changing, as I really liked the high school version of myself. I was cool, calm, confident, self-depreciating, funny, and well revered. The current version of me, while more evolved, advanced, and complex, has lost key elements of the prior version. Perhaps I'm longing for naiveté and cocksureness, but nonetheless the current version is lacking and not well-received by those closest to me.

To aide in all these endeavors, I've set the intention to be more mindful and aware of myself. Along with this, I will use a variety of Creativity tools and concepts, most importantly journaling, to document and observe - like an out of body anthropologist of me. Further, I will implement Intuitive tools learned in Cynthia Burnett's Holistic Approaches to Creative Problem Solving course to help me discover deeper, more intimate truths.

As per manifestos, I will provide a brief history and context to reintroduce the art to the lay-world. I will chronicle my research and practice with the art to allow others to see the process. Ultimately, I will a personal manifesto which will be printed, published, and available for display – true to the art of manifesto. Further, a small guide will be produced to help others create their own manifesto, with tips and suggestions gained from my experiences.

### *Rationale for Selection*

The selection of this project was a journey in itself. Like many, I came into the Project class with grand delusions of what I wanted and could do. After dispelling and

realizing I wouldn't be able to leave the course and program with an easily implementable, super-profitable business plan, I narrowed my choice to two: 1) a video project interviewing Creative Studies students and alumni to connect us and promote us, and 2) a project into the lost art of manifesto, which I originally likened to a mission statement on steroids.

As I've chronicled in other classes, I have horrible personal decision-making skills, that is, I can't easily make a decision concerning myself. In fact, I'll often have a gut inclination and ignore it to go in the opposite direction, or what I perceive as the logical choice. This played out in choosing my project, as my gut and heart said manifesto, but my head said video interviews.

Manifesto, at its heart, is about intention, and being bold enough to declare them – prior to this project, I've been ignoring and hiding from mine. E. Paul Torrance's *Manifesto for Children* (2002) was unknowingly just over my shoulder as I discussed possible project ideas with Cyndi Burnett, my project advisor. This sign was proof enough to choose the topic and reignite the art of and dispel the myths surrounding manifesto.

#### *What This Project Adds Creatively to Myself and Others*

Sometimes, in all the rhetoric of offering the world's only Master's degree in creativity, and that it's a master's of science and thus academically rigorous, the International Center for Studies in Creativity is remiss to point out that this program is a gigantic journey into one's self. We enter in various states, whether scared, nervous, anxious, excited, filled with wild ideas and motives, and so on, but it seems we all will leave changed people. This is to be expected of any graduate degree program, but the

difference is that we aren't just learning or advancing a skill set, we are identifying who we are and where we stand in this great big world and the great unknown of creativity. We explore inward so that the 4 P's (person, process, product, press) are better outwardly expressed. What I'm really driving home is that everyone's journey is unique, but nonetheless it is the journey that we are on and it is our tying bond.

My journey is no different and radically different all in the same. I came to the program wanting to change the world, and while I still do, I've come to realize that I must change myself first. This project will heighten and explore the change process I'm going through to aide me in any future endeavor - career, creative, personal, or just life in general.

Others will no doubt be affected by my journey, either from personal interaction, as merely a path/guide for example, or through how I change the world after changing my own.

Through all this journeying, the common denominator will of course be manifesto, which is an immensely creative act in producing and publishing one. The act of creating a manifesto closely mirrors aspects of divergent and convergent thinking, in that, one must free them self of barriers, blocks, or judgments, produce a mass quantity of ideas, and dare to be unique and bold in their passions and statements. Along the convergent line, one must be affirmative and deliberate, check objectives, be open to the new and unusual, and constantly strive to improve upon options. Even when one has their intentions and passions stated, the objective becomes to make them outstanding. It's one thing to say, "I'm going to change the world", but it's a whole other to say, "I'm going to massage a message to manifest the mold and model I most want to see". So, the words

alone will be a creative challenge.

Further, I will reintroduce the world to the art of manifesto, bringing life back to an art that can and has inspired change, movement, and revolution. To quote, in my opinion, the most famous manifesto, the Declaration of Independence, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

## Section Two: Pertinent Literature

### *Introduction*

The following resources have guided and inspired me in my journey and the art of manifesto. It's to be noted that there aren't many scholarly sources available that provide information or insight into manifesto, other than those already discussed written manifestos. I'm not so much after what one particular manifesto means, so much as what manifesto, in particular my manifesto, means to me. You'll not easily find a history of manifesto, but rather stories and whimsical ditties that tell tales of manifesto. So it goes, it's fitting, as manifesto is something better and more easily experienced and done, than read about. Nonetheless, the following sources having inspired, enlightened, and thought-provoked me.

**Manifesto Wikipedia entry:** <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manifesto>

A good place to start for anyone interested in manifesto. It provides a quasi-definition, etymology, outside manifesto links, and a plethora of manifestos.

### **Assorted Manifesto definitions:**

[http://www.google.com/search?q=define%3A+manifesto&rls=com.microsoft:\\*&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&startIndex=&startPage=1](http://www.google.com/search?q=define%3A+manifesto&rls=com.microsoft:*&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&startIndex=&startPage=1)

Another great starter, providing numerous definitions from varied sources. Be wary of all sources listed, though, as in any Google search, keywords are the focus, and a variety of sources and purposes can be using any given keyword at any given time.

**Manifestos.net - A compilation of manifestos:** <http://www.manifestos.net/>

A database of manifestos covering a variety of topics, people, and organizations. It helped to read other manifestos to get a sense and feel for them.

### **How to Write a Manifesto:**

<http://www.geocities.com/Area51/Labyrinth/8584/howto.html>

A good basal how-to guide to get a better feel for what goes into writing a manifesto. Offers tips and tricks, is put into layman's terms, and is simple and easy to follow.



**Write a Manifesto: Creativity Tip:**

[http://www.creativecreativity.com/2007/04/write\\_a\\_manifesto.html](http://www.creativecreativity.com/2007/04/write_a_manifesto.html)

A great primer and encourager to writing manifesto. Shows their fun side and that manifesto is and can be for everyone, not just revolutionaries and artists. Gives examples and insight into the importance of wording.

**Conjure Crafts - How to Write a Manifesto:**

<http://conjurecrafts.blogspot.com/2007/12/how-to-write-manifesto.html>

A fun resource, as it ties manifestos into New Year's Resolutions. Trumps up manifestos and gives a brief, but excellent guide to writing your own manifesto.

**Manifesto Television - How to Write Your Manifesto:**

<http://www.manifestotv.com/communicate/?p=73>

A motivation and activism website that has manifesto at its core principles. They have their own manifesto, as well as a guide to writing your own manifesto. The guide is detailed, simple, creative, fun, and meaningful. Great for those who are interested in and/or committed to creating their own manifesto.

**E.piphanies - Manifesto:** <http://e.piphanies.com/manifesto.php>

Great resource for personal manifesto writing. Shows that manifestos aren't just political and/or for artists. Simple, yet powerful in its message. Gives an example manifesto, as well as a template for writing your own.

**Fruitful Strategy - Writing a Brand Manifesto:**

[http://brand.blogs.com/mantra/2004/08/writing\\_a\\_brand.html](http://brand.blogs.com/mantra/2004/08/writing_a_brand.html)

This site talks about using manifestos for business and creating a brand manifesto. Includes examples of current brand manifestos, such as Chipotle's "Food With Integrity" manifesto.

**Thinking With Shakespeare - Why you should write your own manifesto [a manifesto]:** <http://www.thinkingwithshakespeare.org/index.php?id=103>

Choppy little piece, written like a manifesto, compelling you to write a manifesto. Provides snippets from other manifestos to further encourage you. Also provides links to other manifestos and manifesto resources.

**The Declaration of Independence:**

<http://www.ushistory.org/declaration/document/index.htm>

Provided insight into an early piece of manifesto, one which radically changed the face of the world. It represents the essence of manifesto, being bold, public, filled with values

and intents, and of course, being declared. Served as inspiration for the project and in writing my own manifesto.

**How to Write an Avant-Garde Manifesto (A Manifesto):**

[www.londonconsortium.com/wp-content/uploads/2007/02/scrivneripmessay.pdf](http://www.londonconsortium.com/wp-content/uploads/2007/02/scrivneripmessay.pdf)

A how-to and history, rolled up in humor, all about manifesto. Writer and musician Lee Scrivner presents an accurate, yet satirical look at the art and history of manifesto. Serves to provide excellent context and tips in all things manifesto. A must read for anyone wanting to write their own manifesto or simply history buffs in general.

Torrance, E. (2002). *The Manifesto: A Guide to Developing a Creative Career*.

More about the longitudinal creativity study Torrance undertook in Minnesota involving elementary school children, but the study does culminate in developing a manifesto with the 215 test subjects. They are later followed up with to see if they have validated the intentions of the manifesto. Quite an inspiring piece, particularly so for those in the fields of creativity and education. The Manifesto for Children is brilliant, beautiful and poetic – a wonderful example for anyone wanting to write their own.

### **Section Three: Process Plan**

#### *Introduction*

All along, I sincerely believe I was meant to struggle and meander so much with my project. When the subject matter is personal, I'm a horrible decision maker, and in the case of this project, it was highly personal. Furthering this, I'm a huge incubator, needing time to stew and develop ideas in my mind before I can move forward. Finally, my original idea for a project was far too lofty and unfeasible. Once I realized I couldn't create a highly successful, profitable, and pre-packaged business plan from my master's project, I panicked. I genuinely thought I could simply develop a rough business idea into a ready-to-go business plan set to make profit, all in a matter of a few months. Once I dispelled this mistaken notion, I wracked my mind to come up with, or rather force, ideas for projects. I came up with two solid ideas and ultimately chose the wrong one for me, as I have a history of denying my gut instinct and intuition in favor of the logical answer or choice.

Having made my decision, but lacking real passion or motivation, I toiled. Consciously or unconsciously, I developed an extremely loose process plan and timeline to complete the video project. This further enabled my naturally tendency of procrastination. After countless unproductive hours of staring at my computer's desktop, I could no longer deny my heart and gut's intention. I had to switch projects mid-semester.

This revelation and combination of events and factors actually motivated and moved me along swifter than I could imagine. Along with my procrastination, I crave pressure and deadlines. Knowing one quickly loomed, coupled with the challenge of switching projects enlivened me to stop stalling and start moving. Staying true to self, I

have not developed a firm timeline or process plan, other than committing myself to follow the tenets of a manifesto I discovered. This manifesto is the product of Bre Pettis and Kio Stark, as members of The Cult of Done, a productivity group (Pettis & Stark, 2009). Their manifesto is contained below:

### **The Cult of Done Manifesto**

1. There are three states of being. Not knowing, action and completion.
2. Accept that everything is a draft. It helps to get it done.
3. There is no editing stage.
4. Pretending you know what you're doing is almost the same as knowing what you are doing, so just accept that you know what you're doing even if you don't and do it.
5. Banish procrastination. If you wait more than a week to get an idea done, abandon it.
6. The point of being done is not to finish but to get other things done.
7. Once you're done you can throw it away.
8. Laugh at perfection. It's boring and keeps you from being done.
9. People without dirty hands are wrong. Doing something makes you right.
10. Failure counts as done. So do mistakes.
11. Destruction is a variant of done.
12. If you have an idea and publish it on the internet, that counts as a ghost of done.
13. Done is the engine of more.

Rather than a formal, thought-out and laid-out timeline and process plan, I agreed to myself that I'd adhere to the tenets of this manifesto. It has not only been liberating but since it is action-based, my productivity has soared. Further, I'm a two-way, Ideator/Clarifier according to FourSight ([www.foursightonline.com](http://www.foursightonline.com)), and this gives me the tendency to dawdle with ideas, facts, and questions. In other words, my tangible productivity cedes to the intangible amateur philosophy-hour that plays out in my mind.

Rather than setting hard and fast rules and in addition to following The Cult of Done's manifesto, I've set only intentions for myself in regard to completing my project. I have intended to work on and/or think about my project everyday and I have intended to be more mindful and aware of myself. I feel being attuned to myself is vital in a self-reflective project and journey. It's far too easy to glide through days and life without remembering much or allowing anything to impact you. I've deliberately chosen to attempt to fully take in as much as possible in my days, interactions, and reflections.

This loose pattern allows me the freedom I need and crave to produce quality work. I am unwavering in my confidence of completing this project, what remains is the onus I placed upon myself to create a truly magnificent project - one used as an example for others, whether as examples to follow, lessons and mistakes to learn from, or merely for enjoyment.

### Project Final Timeline

Date	Activities	Time (Hours)
January	Pre-Meeting work and meeting	5
	Develop topics, incubate	5
January-March 26	Miscellaneous Video Project work	25
February	Meet with Class and Sounding Board Partner	10
	Incubate, reflect, journal, fret, procrastinate, discuss topic	28
March 24-25	Research Manifestos, Develop tool/process to create a personal Manifesto	12
March 26	Reflect on topic/project, talk to sounding board partner and other cohorts.	10
March 26	i-Tools on project/situation	3
March 27	Final pep talk and decision to switch	0.3
March	Further Manifesto Research	12
March	Speak with Project Adviser	0.5
March	Draft New Concept Paper	3.5
March	Write Personal Manifesto	4
March	Write Career Manifesto	4
March	Write draft of sections 1-3	16

April	Meet with class and sounding board partner	6
April	Write Sections 4-6	16
April	Write Creativity Manifesto	4
May	Meet with Class	6
May	Prepare and deliver presentation	5
May	Have project bound	2
		Manifesto Project Total = 124.3
		Total Hours = 177.3

## Section Four: Outcomes

### *Introduction*

The final products derived are a personal manifesto and a small guide for others to use to write their own manifestos. The manifesto itself will be made public and the guide will be made available as a PDF download as well. The manifesto is personal and is not directed toward something specific, such as creativity or career, but rather life in general. However, as with any guide or directive to life, it contains segments pertaining to specific topics, but as a whole, it is pointed toward life in general.

### *My Manifesto* by Ryan Easttum

- I will live in a country of my own making
- I can't be anybody but me
- The me today may not resemble me yesterday, nor be the me of tomorrow
- Be authentic. If you have to fake it, you probably shouldn't be doing it
- Don't dwell. Yesterday can't be fixed, but today can still be salvaged and tomorrow can still be saved.
- Laugh. At yourself, at others, and especially if it's funny
- Never be the smartest person in a room - you won't learn anything
- We all get lost and lose motivation and passion. When



that happens, hitch rides and piggy-back.

- Everybody needs help
- Kindness is contagious - carry it on
- I cannot be contained by a cubicle
- I will work for myself because companies are not in business for me
- Family is more important than work
- Tell your friends you love them. For if you don't, they are frenemies or merely acquaintances.
- True happiness comes from within
- I *can* change the world. I'm just not sure the world needs changing - maybe it's us...

The above is my manifesto and after long hours of incubation, reflection, and editing, this is the version presented today. Manifesto is a living document, and I, as manifester of this manifesto, reserve the right to revise at will. It is my thoughts and guidelines to living my life.

### *Manifesto Guide*

The manifesto guide I created is very simple and brief. It provides a quick reference to what manifesto is and how to go about writing one of your own. Manifesto is shrouded in mystery, so I attempted to take it out of that realm and personalize it. The guide is about 3/4 of a page and meant to be snappy, quick, and fun to read. It incorporates many aspects of creativity and creative problem solving, such as being

creative in general, not judging, being wild and crazy, and incubation. The manifesto guide itself is shown in Appendix B.

While mainly for individuals to write personal manifestos, like many CPS tools, the guide can be adapted, and provides tips to do so, to create a group manifesto. The guide is complete in instruction and directions, but still needs polishing in the way of aesthetics.

## Section Five: Key Learnings

### *Introduction*

*Well, there is trouble in my mind  
       There is dark  
 There's dark, and there is light.  
 I lay your hands over my eyes  
       As I look deep  
 Through valleys deep and wide  
       Across the border line  
 For the Empire in My Mind*

*You are the reason I don't sleep  
       You are the light  
 That's breaking through the leaves  
       You know how hard I try  
       To believe  
 I have something good inside  
       Over barricades I climb  
 For the Empire in My Mind.*

*I have no love somewhere in time  
       I've been lifted up  
       I've looked honor in the eyes  
 I have no reason; I have no rhyme  
       I cannot deny  
 There's a darkness that's inside  
       I am guilty by design  
       And now I realize  
 The temptation's made me blind  
       To the Empire in My Mind*

*There is no order  
       There is chaos  
       And there is crime  
 There is no one home tonight  
       In the Empire in My Mind*

*There is no distance that I don't see  
       I do have a will  
       No limit to my reach  
 I wish I would; I wish I might  
       See a line tonight  
       Separating wrong from right  
       Some are only born to try  
 And maybe that's the reason why*

*I am afraid someday I'll find  
There is no Empire in My Mind*

*There is trouble in my life  
There is trouble in my life*

- The Empire in My Mind, by Jakob Dylan

Call me melodramatic, call me what you will, but for six years something has been itching inside me, and just like a petulant scratch hidden beneath a plaster cast, I've been unable to scratch it. As the song above illustrates, I hold an empire in my mind, a lofty greatness I don't know how to reach. I believe I'm destined for it and I even dream about it. In fact, the name Ryan means "little king" and I buy into it. However, it's this very empire in my mind that's been my block, my barrier, and my adversary. I've taken my personal monarchy to that of benevolence and altruism, but in actuality, it is jaded and it is dark. In fact, it's exactly what I loathe – selfishness.

I've spent so much of my time and life pretending to be better than people and I've done so by being smarter than them, lording that knowledge, and fixing all their problems. Instead of revering me, they've grown to despise me, and it is that and so much more that's compelled me to once and for all solve my own problems. I'm adept at solving other people's problems, yet if I cannot solve my own, not to mention that problem solving is paramount to the field of creativity, then I fear I may never even glimpse the greatness I still believe lies hidden inside me.

I am the first to admit that I am not the easiest person to understand or figure out- it's not that I'm lying, I'm just not being honest, especially with myself. Therefore, this journey required something bold to bail me out. That something was the manifesto. This lost art, steeped in revolt and revolution, is misunderstood and often associated with the

craziness of Ted Kaczynski and the Red-scares of communism. To me, it represents a quasi-mission statement on steroids and is the bold and brazen public declaration of intent, passion, and revolt. Through manifesto's process of discovery and declaration I have come that much closer in finding myself, my greatness, and taking my first step on whatever path I choose.

The art of manifesto and creativity are closely linked. Many of the tenets of manifesto, especially in creating one, share the same guidelines of creative problem solving. Further, just as much of creativity is implicit, so is manifesto – it has to be authentic and come from within. It is those two principles that guided me in this journey. In this project and in life, I have always been trying to force something – my dreams, my passions, my desires, even my supposed greatness or destiny. I haven't allowed myself or the process to be authentic nor unfold naturally.

### *Content*

Throughout this journey, I knew I was missing something, if not some things. I needed something to motivate me, make me passionate, and drive me toward my dreams, whatever they might be. I've been fascinated by the art of manifesto for a while and often wondered why manifestos didn't hang on walls next to mission and vision statements. I personally liken manifestos to mission statements on steroids, but that they are also much more personal. They're public declarations of a person's guide to life, their passions and rules to live and govern (mostly them self) by.

In creating my manifesto, I relied heavily on my writing ability, knowing that I could make my passions and declarations stand out, while still being succinct. The aspect of writing and ability is largely left out in manifesto writing. In fact, there really isn't

much available, in general, about manifestos, much less writing them for yourself.

While passion and writing ability is very important in manifesto writing, I learned that the most important aspect of it all is the bravery and commitment to be willing to publicly declare your manifesto and recite it at will. It's an act just as much as it is an art – if you're not proud of it, then it's not worthy of being a manifesto and thus made public.

### *Process*

Much of the process for me was the act(s) of self-discovery. I needed to delve into me, my passions, beliefs, and dreams in order to write this extremely personal document. What got me to it and through it were tools learned in a Holistic Approaches to Creative Problem Solving course, taught by Cynthia Burnett. The tools I used dealt largely with self-reflection and being aware of my intuition, that is, what my heart and gut were telling me.

Facts, Feelings & Hunches (Burnett, 2009), and Head, Heart, Gut (Burnett, 2008 as cited in Francisco and Burnett, 2008) are the tools that guided me to switch, as both were telling me that I really wanted to do manifesto (especially my heart and gut), and that I was doing the video project for all the wrong reasons. I thought and still believe, that the video project is a worthy and great project, it just wasn't the right time or place for me to do it. I set out to interview students and alumni to connect us all and create a sense of community and network, but in actuality, I was seeking affirmation and acceptance. I wasn't lying to people about my intentions and rationale; I just wasn't being completely honest – especially with myself.

ImageStreaming (Wenger, 1991) really gave me insight into myself, my passions, and my desires. It showed me what I really seek and stand for, all the while giving me the

affirmation I was longing for. I've been so wrapped up in not having a clear cut dream or ideal job, yet through ImageStreaming, I realized I love to help people, I'm very good at, and I do it quite often – more so than I ever help myself. I realized then that I may not have a clear cut dream or path, but those around me do and millions of other people do as well. I should harness my skill of helping others and piggy-back their dreams and in the process help them achieve them. This prospect is a double-edged sword, in that it could be perceived that I'm not personally achieving anything or that I'm leeching off others' hopes and dreams. However, I see it as producing action, applicable to the Cult of Done Manifesto (Pettis & Stark, 2009), and I'm biding my time and gaining insight and inspiration until my own dreams reveal themselves. Specifically, I thought of my girlfriend, Audrey, as she is so motivated, determined, and passionate toward her dreams and I've already helped her greatly in achieving them thus far. I'd love to bask in the glow of her success and gain insight, all the while helping her succeed and enjoying the happiness of others. Help is such a simple concept, yet it bears such profound meaning and results for me.

The overarching lesson in it all has been to strive to be authentic and allow things to happen naturally. I fully believe that you cannot force creativity and just the same, I couldn't force this master's project, nor my manifesto. I need to allow myself the time and space to let things evolve and take shape on their own. I spent too much time, effort, and energy on saying this is what I'm going to do/produce, this was the old me and this is how I'm going to change, etc. Instead, I simply need to be authentic. I just need to say this is the current version of me, and what I produce is what I produce. I tried too hard, to the point of forcing, to produce these amazing personal and creative manifestos. However,

my most meaningful work came from what I'm passionate about: helping others and loved ones. I needed to be authentic and allow this to unfold, rather than force something because it seemed good.

All this is not to say I'm going to be the ultimate incubator, borderline procrastinator, as I've already spent enough time in those realms. Rather, I've learned that some things beg for authenticity and an organic process. Sure, I could have produced many manifestos if I forced them, but contrary to the CPS tenet that quantity breeds quality, manifesto begs for quality – not just anything is worthy of posting and declaring. With all this, I learned that even a slow, natural, and organic process can have daily, incremental progress. In keeping with the tenets of the Cult of Done, I worked on my project every day, even if it was as simple as thinking about it. If I had a section that I just wasn't feeling motivated for, I would shelve it and work on something I did have the passion for. This process might seem disjointed, but it was highly productive and I was able to produce an entire master's project in half the time.



## **Section Six: Conclusion**

### *Introduction*

Everyone talks about how this program changes you and how you grow so much throughout, but I just thought that was cliché rhetoric. I was wrong. This program, highlighted by the master's project class, showed me just how far I've come. I came to Buffalo missing something, and while I'm not yet whole, I stand on firm ground knowing at the very least who I am today and what I value and believe. Through manifesto, I've taken this a step further and dared to make it public, holding myself accountable to my declarations.

The biggest lesson I've learned and what I'm now constantly striving for is authenticity. Creativity comes from within and cannot be forced - it has to be authentic. This lesson and project has helped greatly in developing my personal creative philosophy, especially about not forcing things and being authentic. It's too easy to fake things and do things for the wrong reasons. It's much harder to actually listen to your heart and gut, and do what you believe is right.

I now know that I have to put down the crown and pick up the shovel. That is, stop dwelling and start doing. My personal manifesto, though seemingly simple, really conveys all that I've been through and discovered. I'm comfortable in my own skin and I'm proud and confident in my words. My manifesto is now part of a public record and my creativity is just beginning to blossom.

### *Next Steps*

What I see myself doing now is continuing to develop and research manifesto, in hopes of making it more mainstream, producing many personal manifestos and possibly

develop a plan to bring them to the business realm and have manifestos on business walls alongside mission and vision statements.

More importantly, I see myself living my manifesto: publish it into a poster, frame it, and at least glance at it every day. I want to reread it at least every month and reflect on it. If I find it needs revising, then I can certainly do so.

Others can build on this by having CRS students write their own personal creativity manifestos in the capstone class, similar to writing one's own personal creative philosophy. Further out, it would be nice to see the department collaborate to develop a manifesto for the department and for the field and concept of creativity.

Something else I'm quite passionate about is developing a seminar for students interested in the project class, to take the semester prior to actually enrolling. This is so they can understand the project and what it entails. They can then do the adopt-a-project at that time, so that they get the jist of the project and can be thinking about project ideas prior to enrolling and being thrown into the thick of it all. This class was not what I thought it would be. It became so much more than the project itself and morphed into something highly personal and introspective. I came in thinking I'd get a business plan, but I left a more authentic and real me. You can't ask for a whole lot more.

## References

- Burnett, C. (2009, March 28). Facts, feelings & hunches. Lecture conducted in the Holistic Approaches to CPS class, Buffalo, NY.
- Francisco, J. & Burnett, C. (May, 2008). Deliberate intuition: Giving intuitive insights their rightful place in the Creative Problem Solving Thinking Skills Model. Conference presentation and proceedings for the 2nd annual international meeting of the Creativity and Innovation Management Journal.
- Pettis, B. & Stark, K. (2009, March 3). The Cult of Done Manifesto. Message posted to <http://www.brepettis.com/>
- Torrance, E. (2002). *The Manifesto: A Guide to Developing a Creative Career*. Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood Publishing Group.
- Wenger, W. (1991). *A Method For Personal Growth and Development* (3rd ed.). Gaithersburg, MD: Project Renaissance.

## *Appendix A*

# **Reinventing the Revolution: Manifesting the Manifesto - A Personal Revolt**

**Name:** Ryan Easttum **Date Submitted:** March 31st, 2009

**Project Type:** Develop a Skill/Talent

### **What Is This Project About?**

This project is about exploring and understanding who I am and where I fit in the realm of creativity and the world as a whole. Much like Creative Problem Solving (CPS) is looked at like software versions (1.0, 1.1, 1.2, etc.), I too am ever changing. This project will allow me to delve into who I really am, what I really stand for, and what I'm truly passionate about. The guiding force behind this radical exploration is the art of Manifesto.

Manifesto will lead the revolt to my revolution, because it is that I need – a rebirth.

Manifesto is more than politics and art; it can be deeply personal, but the unifying factor is the public declaration of ideas, stance, and intent.

It is my hope that this process will teach me about myself, forcing me to confront demons and personal blocks and barriers. Further, I hope to once and for all find my passion and motivation, which will lead me to my career and ultimate happiness. More importantly, I hope others can and will learn from my process and journey, so that they too can find a place of inner peace, solace, happiness, excitement, and revolution.

As per Creative Problem Solving and/or creativity concepts or skills involved, I'd like to use CPS and my program learnings thus far to carry through the entire process/project. In addition, I will incorporate intuitive tools to aide my self-exploration and reflection, and also to help in the decision making process. Also, I'd like to weave a flair of creativity throughout the entire process/project – that no matter what I produce, it be creative and exciting, for others as well as self.

### **Rationale for Choice:**

It's been far too long since I've been completely honest with myself and others. I openly admit I'm a people pleaser and I take great pride and boast of being selfless. In fact, the thought of being selfish stings inside me. I loathe spending time, money, or care on myself, but love to do those things for others – to a point of fault.

What ultimately happens though, is a vicious cycle where those around me grow and I stagnate, if not decay. This process carried into project class, where I initially chose to do video interviews for my project. I did this for two reasons: 1.) it would please others, and 2.) because I convinced myself my problem was a lack of connection in the department and that interviewing others would solve that. What really was the case was that

interviewing peers would give me affirmation and acceptance – a feeling that it's OK to feel a little lost and lonely and that others share my feelings (misery loves company, right?).

Remembering back to this past New Year's my dad joked with me that he was through with resolutions and it was time for revolutions. I laughed it off, but upon recent reflection, it was exactly what I need. At nearly a quarter century old, it's time for me to stop the self-loathing and self-pity, change what's wrong, find direction, passion, and motivation, and be the best version of me possible.

The change agent will be me, but the model of change will largely be Manifesto. I'm hoping that I can breathe new life in an overlooked and misunderstood art and that Manifesto, in many forms, can help and inspire others. I hope to not only change my life, but that I may plant the seed of a greater revolution.

I didn't travel nearly 2,500 miles just for a Master's degree; I came here to change my life and the lives of others. It is my sincere intent to do just that with my project and thru Manifesto.

### **What Will be the Tangible Product(s) or Outcomes?**

The concrete, created effort/result will be a personal manifesto, as well as other life, career, and creativity focused manifestos, which will be printed for public declaration. I hope to also produce a simple process/tool for creating a personal manifesto.

### **What Criteria Will You Use To Measure The Effectiveness Of Your Achievement?**

Producing and displaying three (3) personal manifestos will be considered a success. These three are hoped to be a personal manifesto (about me), a creativity manifesto, and a career or love manifesto. I also expect to produce a tool or process to aide others in developing their own manifesto. However, most importantly, the best benchmarks will be my personal growth and if those who I'm closest to notice any positive changes.

### **Who Will Be Involved or Influenced; What Will Your Role Be?**

Ultimately, I'm the sole proprietor of this project. Therefore, I'll be the one doing the action, both behind the scenes (reflection) and center stage (produced and polished products). I also hope that my journey positively affects those around me. Further, I hope to introduce the art of manifesto to a larger and broader audience.

### **When Will This Project Take Place?**

This project will take place throughout the second half of the Spring 2009 semester. The products will be produced and published by the beginning of May, 2009, however, the reflective and growth process/journey, is hoped to continue on after the semester.

### **Where Will This Project Occur?**

The majority of this project will take place in my apartment, just off Elmwood Avenue, in Buffalo, New York. However, as the project centers around me, it is bound to spill over into all areas of my life, including, but not limited to, my place of work on Buffalo State College's campus, as well as other Buffalo State locales, and also in East Lansing, Michigan, at my girlfriend's home.

### **Why Is It Important to Do This?**

Introspection, self-reflection, and personal growth are often some of the hardest issues to tackle. It's usually much easier to help others, as we often do with CPS, but when dealing with self it becomes much more poignant and uncomfortably personal. It's vitally important to do this project for myself and my own well-being, but it is the radiant effects it will have on those I'm closest to that I'm most looking forward to. When someone can better themselves, it no doubt radiates to those around them. Further, people can learn from my journey and use it as a model to replicate or adapt.

The backbone of this project is manifesto and through my journey and work, I will introduce the lost art to others, including individual parties and organizations. In the same vein as mission, vision, and value statements, manifesto is a means to publicly declare an intent and stance. It's a liberating art and act, that inspires deep and personal reflection and introspection while creating it, and, bravery, boldness, and accountability in making it public. I hope to dispel manifesto myths (a problem the field of creativity encounters), as well as bring it to a prominence where it easily and naturally stands along with the aforementioned mission, vision, and value statements.

### **Personal Learning Goals:**

- Gain insight into who I am, what I stand for, and what I'm passionate about
- Deeply reflect and become honest with myself
- Confront and tackle fears and self-doubt
- Publicly declare my findings
- Find my motivation
- Learn about the art of manifesto
- Learn to write manifesto
- Develop a process for writing manifesto
- Hone my creative philosophy
- Change myself to a better version of me

### **How Do You Plan to Achieve Your Goals and Outcomes?**

I plan to deeply and intently reflect and introspect, while journaling the insights gleaned. I plan to follow, vehemently, to follow the divergent and convergent guidelines, especially deferring judgment and being affirmative. I also plan to use Intuitive tools learned from Cynthia Burnett's Holistic Approaches to CPS course. These tools will allow me to journey deeper into self and more personal, providing more insight than traditional CPS tools. By uncovering truths, I hope to tackle fears, obstacles, and blocks.

More importantly, I plan to uncover goals, dreams, desires, and passions to help guide me in my growth. I plan to be more mindful and aware of my self, to aide in my inward journey.

I of course plan to research and practice manifesto writing, as well as using traditional CPS methods to help develop a teachable process/tool for others to develop their own manifesto.

### **Evaluation:**

Ultimate evaluation will lie in me - I must be honest with myself to gauge my growth and insight. However, I do plan to observe if those closest to me notice any changes in me (not everyone will be informed of my journey). Much of the assessment will revolve around how I feel, which is extremely arbitrary, but I can honestly say I'm at an unsatisfactory starting point. I will document my feelings at the starting point and compare them to my feelings at the end of the brief semester journey. As per manifesto, I will publicly display my manifestos and collect informal feedback on them. Further, I will introduce manifesto to lay people close to me, encourage them to develop their own, through the use of my developed process/tool, and gain their thoughts, feelings, and feedback regarding it all - the art and the process.

### **Prepare Project Timeline:**

Date	Activities	Time (Hours)
January	Pre-Meeting work and meeting	5
	Develop topics, incubate	5
January-March 26	Miscellaneous Video Project work	25
February	Meet with Class and Sounding Board Partner	10
	Incubate, reflect, journal, fret, procrastinate, discuss topic	28
March 24-25	Research Manifestos, Develop tool/process to create a personal Manifesto	12
March 26	Reflect on topic/project, talk to sounding board partner and other	10

	cohorts.	
March 26	i-Tools on project/situation	3
March 27	Final pep talk and decision to switch	0.3
March	Further Manifesto Research	12
March	Speak with Project Adviser	0.5
March	Draft New Concept Paper	3.5
March	Write Personal Manifesto	4
March	Write Career Manifesto	4
March	Write draft of sections 1-3	16
April	Meet with class and sounding board partner	6
April	Write Sections 4-6	16
April	Write Creativity Manifesto	4
May	Meet with Class	6
May	Prepare and deliver presentation	5
May	Have project bound	2
		Manifesto Project Total = 124.3
		Total Hours = 177.3



## Identify Pertinent Literature or Resources:

- Manifesto Wikipedia entry: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manifesto>
- The Mozilla Manifesto: <http://www.mozilla.org/about/manifesto.en.html>
- Assorted Manifesto definitions: [http://www.google.com/search?hl=en&client=firefox-a&rls=org.mozilla:en-US:official&hs=QBi&defl=en&q=define:manifesto&ei=xOfPSZe8GsrnmnQeCxuHkCQ&sa=X&oi=glossary\\_definition&ct=title](http://www.google.com/search?hl=en&client=firefox-a&rls=org.mozilla:en-US:official&hs=QBi&defl=en&q=define:manifesto&ei=xOfPSZe8GsrnmnQeCxuHkCQ&sa=X&oi=glossary_definition&ct=title)
- How to Write a Manifesto:  
<http://www.geocities.com/Area51/Labyrinth/8584/howto.html>
- Write a Manifesto: Creativity Tip:  
[http://www.creativecreativity.com/2007/04/write\\_a\\_manifestes.html](http://www.creativecreativity.com/2007/04/write_a_manifestes.html)
- Conjure Crafts - How to Write a Manifesto:  
<http://conjurecrafts.blogspot.com/2007/12/how-to-write-manifesto.html>
- Manifesto Television - How to Write Your Manifesto:  
<http://www.manifestotv.com/communicate/?p=73>
- E.piphanies - Manifesto: <http://e.piphanies.com/manifesto.php>
- Fruitful Strategy - Writing a Brand Manifesto:  
[http://brand.blogs.com/mantra/2004/08/writing\\_a\\_brand.html](http://brand.blogs.com/mantra/2004/08/writing_a_brand.html)
- Thinking With Shakespeare - Why you should write your own manifesto [a manifesto]:  
<http://www.thinkingwithshakespeare.org/index.php?id=103>
- Manifestos: Poetry of the Revolution: <http://press.princeton.edu/chapters/i8066.html>
- Manifestos.net - A compilation of manifestos: <http://www.manifestos.net/>

## Manifestos

- Manifesto for Children - E. P. Torrance (1983) Manifesto for Children, Athens, GA: Georgia Studies of Creative Behavior and Full Circle Counseling, Inc.
- Free Font Manifesto: [http://www.designwritingresearch.org/free\\_fonts.html](http://www.designwritingresearch.org/free_fonts.html)
- 100 Words: A Manifesto for Sustainability in Design:  
[http://www.core77.com/reactor/04.07\\_chochinov.asp](http://www.core77.com/reactor/04.07_chochinov.asp)

- The Corporate Weblog Manifesto: <http://scoble.weblogs.com/2003/02/26.html>
- The Job Seeker Manifesto: <http://www.therecruiterslounge.com/2005/05/16/the-job-seeker-manifesto/>
- Draft Craft Manifesto:  
[http://ullamaaria.typepad.com/hobbyprincess/2005/03/draft\\_craft\\_man.html](http://ullamaaria.typepad.com/hobbyprincess/2005/03/draft_craft_man.html)

## *Appendix B*

Me oh, my oh, manifesto:

A manifesto is more than a Unabomber rant and they aren't just for art movements. They're like a personal mission statement - on steroids. It's a document YOU write to publicly declare your guidelines, rules, and values on life or anything you want. Just make sure it's loud and proud and worthy of being read, and more importantly, declared.

Write your own:

First things first, you have to want this AND be willing to put your manifesto out there. If you're ready and willing, let's get started. You need to be:

- Open: you have to put yourself out there
- Honest: If you're not telling the truth, you're not doing anyone any good
- Creative: Who wants to read a boring manifesto??

OK, now you need to decide on the focus of your manifesto. If you already know that, great. If not, start by just freewriting what you're passionate about, positive or negative. For instance, if you really love something, list it. Conversely, if something really annoys you, list that too. Once you list everything important and that you're passionate about, read it and set it aside. Manifesto is an authentic experience and is best brewed and stewed than forced.

Once you've incubated, you're likely to have some stronger thoughts, feelings, ideas, and passions. Take those and write them too. Go through your list and pick all those that speak to you and/or fit together, if you have a themed manifesto in mind.

With your statements, analyze them and make them more action oriented. Your manifesto is meant to inspire, not just linger. Think action words, be fun, be creative, be zany - remember, it's yours, so run with it. When you've got the wording, start working on the order of your statements, and place them thematically or in the order that feels 'right'.

Remember: don't judge or limit yourself. If you're afraid to say or write something it's probably because it's good stuff and powerful, which also means it's dangerous. That's good. Live on that edge and be bold.

Once it's all in order, feel free to decorate your manifesto - it doesn't have to be just words.

When you're all done, post it and declare it to the world: Behold, my manifesto!! (soapbox and megaphone to declare manifesto is optional)